



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

March 13, 2017

CONTACT:

Chris Cochran

(916) 509-3063

chris.cochran@ots.ca.gov

DON'T PUSH YOUR LUCK THIS ST. PATRICK'S HOLIDAY

SACRAMENTO, CA – St. Patrick's Day isn't a celebration just for the Irish anymore. The holiday is widely celebrated across the country and has become one of the most dangerous, due to the number of drunk drivers on the road. The California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) wants to remind everyone not to push their Irish luck this holiday. There will be an increase in DUI patrols by local law enforcement during and around the holiday to help keep our roads safe. Luck won't help if you drive while impaired, so plan ahead and designate a sober driver before the drinking begins.

"St. Patrick's Day is a fun celebration of Irish culture, with parades and music," said OTS Director Rhonda Craft. "With alcohol as a staple at most celebrations, OTS wants to remind you to make sure you have a plan to get home safely before the green beer starts flowing."

From 2011 to 2015, 252 people were killed in drunk-driving crashes over the St. Patrick's Day holiday period. In 2015 alone, 30 lives were lost. The consequences of drunk driving can not only be fatal, they're also expensive. Aside from jail time, the average DUI can cost \$10,000. Remember, DUI doesn't just mean booze. Celebrating with marijuana, taking impairing prescription medications, or combining them with alcohol can get you a DUI.

Planning ahead is the key to staying safe after you've been drinking. Before the party starts, make a plan for how to get home safely.

- A safe, sober ride home is an essential part of any plan that includes drinking. Before celebrating St. Patrick's Day this year, decide whether you'll drink or you'll drive. You can't do both. If you're planning on driving, commit to staying sober. Download OTS' Designated Driver VIP mobile app, "DDVIP," on your Android or iPhone. The DDVIP app helps find nearby bars and restaurants that feature free incentives for the designated sober driver, from free non-alcoholic drinks to free appetizers and more. The feature-packed app even has social media tie-ins and even a tab for the non-DD to call Uber, Lyft or Curb.
- If you will be drinking and need a sober ride home, there are many options. Plan ahead for a ride from family, a friend, taxi, rideshare, or stay overnight within walking distance.
- Help those around you be responsible, too. If someone you know is drinking, do not let them get behind the wheel and help them find a sober ride home.

No matter how you will be celebrating St. Patrick's Day this year, The California Office of Traffic Safety wants you to have a fun, safe and lucky holiday. For more safety tips and information please visit the OTS Facebook at www.facebook.com/CaliforniaOTS or follow OTS on Twitter @OTS_CA. For more information on all OTS efforts, go to www.ots.ca.gov.

###